

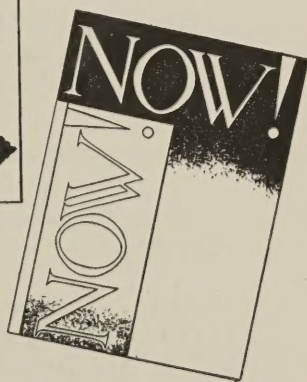
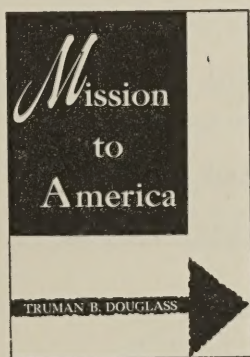
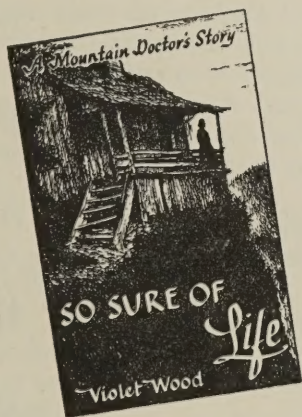
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GUIDE FOR ADULTS  
on  
*Churches for  
Our Country's Needs*

by *MABEL M. SHEIBLEY*

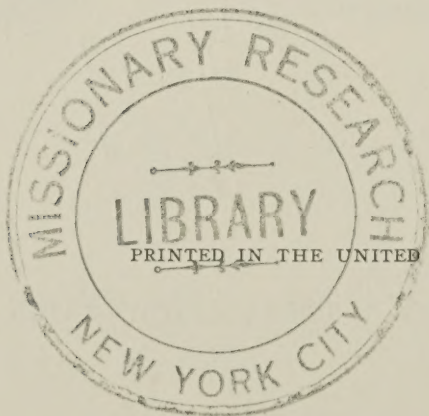
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FRIENDSHIP PRESS 1951 NEW YORK

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## TALKING IT OVER WITH THE LEADER

The first approach to your study should be an understanding of the theme. An epitome of this comes from a British publication. "Church extension is more than architecture; it is evangelism," states a writer in the *British Weekly*,<sup>1</sup> and continues, "Church extension is more than stone and mortar. It has to be interpreted in terms of the 'lively stones,' the spiritual house, the holy priesthood." This is, in essence, the interpretation of the theme, "Churches for Our Country's Needs," upon which the two books, *Mission to America* and *Now! Everybody Needs a Church*, are based. In one sense, the theme may mean the actual erection of churches, "stone and mortar," to meet the need for churches for every kind of community but mainly for the growing community as a result of population shifts. Here the emphasis is on "needs." In another and broader sense, it emphasizes the word "churches" and brings us to a study not only of the kind of churches to be established to meet the demands but of the requirements upon the church itself, "the holy priesthood," if it is to be adequate to the country's needs whatever they may be.

You might therefore see your task as bringing to your group the realization of four facts:

1. That large-scale building of churches is not a thing of the past, but that present national conditions make it as imperative now as in the 50's and 70's of the last century.
2. That church extension is more than the erection of church buildings; it is the establishment of the spiritual home for the community or a section of it and the founding of a "priesthood of believers"; in this sense it is evangelism.
3. That Christianity is a movement, and that the organ of this movement is the Christian church.
4. That our vocation as Christians is within the church; that as Christians we have to be concerned about "the state of the church in a sustained and personal way."

To use the language of today, you may be ready to say "terrific!" Yes, and that is what the study itself will be—deep-probing, mind-stretching, eye-opening, forward-looking, all-embracing, personal rather than objective, evangelistic as the members of the group take it to heart.

<sup>1</sup> "Extend the Church," by the Very Rev. Dr. John White, in *British Weekly*, December 21, 1950. Used by permission.

## YOUR PREPARATION

1. Familiarize yourself with all the materials prepared by the Joint Commission on Missionary Education to assist you in the leadership of your course. (For further information about these and other supplies see the list at the end of this section.) These materials include: *Mission to America*, by Truman B. Douglass, the adult study book; *Now! Everybody Needs a Church*, a magazine-type book for supplementary use by adults, composite authorship; the *Guide for Adults on "Churches for Our Country's Needs,"* now in your hands.

*Mission to America* presents present conditions in America; opposing forces or antagonists of Christianity; secular allies of the church; an aggressive church program to meet the changing conditions of American life; an appreciation of the meaning, reality, and potential power of the Christian church; methods of developing a responsible churchmanship. This basic book should be completely read and studied by the leader before the beginning of the course.

*Now! Everybody Needs a Church* presents evidence, through illustrative material, stories, quotes, and line drawings, that the church is seeking to meet the needs of communities and individuals. The leader will want to draw on this book for pertinent illustrations to bring out points under discussion.

The *Guide for Adults on "Churches for Our Country's Needs"* is based primarily on *Mission to America*. It contains (a) an outline of material to be used in six sessions, and (b) three programs. The latter are included as suggestions to the group as to how to present the high points of their study in program form to other more general groups, such as those meeting on church nights.

Another book that might well be included is *So Sure of Life*, by Violet Wood. *So Sure of Life* tells the full story of how a mission station in the Smoky Mountains is meeting the spiritual, educational, medical, and other needs of a community. Get as many as possible to read it for sheer enjoyment and as the basis for informal conversation.

At your elbow should be the books issued two years ago by Friendship Press, *Missions at the Grass Roots*, by William P. Shriver, and *Again Pioneers*, by Hermann N. Morse.

2. Draw upon other interdenominational material, particularly that available through the Division of Home Missions of the National Council of Churches. Of outstanding importance in this connection is *For A Christian World—A National Congress on Home Missions*. See Sections I, II, and X. Other interdenominational material may also be available; run it down.

3. Consult your own denominational board to see what it is now doing in church extension, what the program calls for, what, if anything, is deterring it. Again, find ways of bringing this question closer home by

consulting regional executives who can give you information on problems and unmet needs in such units as state, county, and city.

You will want to bring the group face to face with the responsibility of their own church in relation to the larger program. With such information you will be able to give both life and promotional value to your course.

4. Procure from your denominational board the material it has issued on this subject, and integrate it throughout the sessions on church extension.

5. Use the guide discriminatingly; nothing here is obligatory. Use only as much material as will be profitable. Do not crowd the session; more material is suggested than can be handled in the time given. Select in advance what will be most helpful to your group. Make assignments early so that all material will be on hand when needed. Too, if your group plans to hold fewer than six sessions, select and telescope your material carefully. You know the members of your group, their interests and possibilities, and may desire entirely different approaches from the ones suggested here. It has been assumed that the group will have read the chapters assigned and will be able to participate in the discussion freely. "To set the stage" an introductory statement by the leader is suggested, but this, too, may be omitted.

6. Pray over your worship service, that it may be a convincing act of devotion on the part of the members of the group and bring them to self-dedication. The services suggested are, of necessity, simple and brief. While they are intended to be an integral part of each session, they form a unit in themselves. Again, they are but suggestions. You, as the leader, or the one chosen by you, may desire something entirely different in scripture passages, hymns, and thoughts for meditation, or another approach altogether. Too, the service may be used at any time during the session,—at the beginning, at any break in the presentation of material, or at the close. The argument for using it at the close is that the heat of discussion is over and the group is ready for a quiet period of devotion.

It is assumed that each session will open with a hymn, a brief prayer, a few sentences of scripture, or all three.

7. Make a study of possible visual methods and of the time when they can be used to the best advantage in the course: home-made maps of crisis areas in your city or state or in the nation; posters, adapted from material in *Mission to America*; motion pictures, as time permits, probably after the sessions close, if not chosen as the basis for discussion. (When ordering a picture, arrange for as wide a use of it as possible in other groups, even the high school. Note suggestions for use in specific sessions and in connection with a church night program.) In selecting motion pictures for this study it would be well to confine yourself to the three 16mm. films mentioned below. Order them through your denominational headquarters.

*We Would Be Building*, a documentary film of the establishment of a church in a new community (Silver Springs, Maryland). The photography is excel-

lent, and there is much human interest. Note the suggestion for use in Session Four. If desired, order today.

*For All People*, a dramatic story of the transformation one church made in the life of a city community, especially among the youth.

*Again Pioneers*, the conflict between a middle-class American town and migrants who have settled on its outskirts and are trying to become a part of the community. The film emphasizes the need to preserve and develop America's spiritual heritage. If desired for Session Five, order now.

8. Study room arrangement in connection with your sessions. If the group is small, place the chairs in a circle, with a slight opening for the table of the leader. If large, still use the circle arrangement, though you may need to have two or three rows. (There is something inclusive and unifying about a circle.) If you have a worship center, make it form a part of the circle line.

9. Make plans to lead your group to see in its work an opportunity to penetrate the whole church with the results of its study. This may be done through popular programs for church nights. These may parallel or climax the study. Discussion as to what form these should take will be a means of evaluating your work as you go along. (Suggestions are given on pages 27-31.)

10. To publicize your study and arouse the interest of the entire congregation, use the display packet and recording that have been prepared by the Joint Commission on Missionary Education. Although they were prepared principally for those who display and sell missionary materials, they may be used to advantage for church advertising and teaching purposes in study groups.

## PARALLEL ACTIVITIES

As you are making your preparations, think in terms of parallel activities, and pass them on to those who can carry them through.

*To your pastor:* Suggest that (a) he invite an executive who knows the situation in the county or the city to speak at the mid-week service or other meeting, and that (b) he himself devote a sermon to the subject, "What Is the Church?"

*To the president of the woman's society:* Suggest that a meeting be devoted to a presentation of some phase of the material covered by Dr. Douglass.

*To the superintendent of the church school:* Suggest that some of the stories in *Now!* be adapted for the children, that they may know some of the things the church is doing.

## LEADER'S SUPPLY LIST

All the supplies listed below, with the exception of publications listed under Books of Other Publishers, may be ordered through your denominational headquarters.

## BOOKS PUBLISHED BY FRIENDSHIP PRESS, NEW YORK

*Again Pioneers*, by Hermann N. Morse. 1949. 60 cents.

*Mission to America*, by Truman Douglass. 1951. Cloth, \$2.00; paper, \$1.25.

*Missions at the Grass Roots*, by William P. Shriver. 1949. \$1.00.

*Now! Everybody Needs a Church*, edited by Mary Margaret Brace and Lucy M. Eldredge. 1951. 35 cents.

*So Sure of Life*, by Violet Wood. 1950. Cloth, \$2.50; paper \$1.25.

## BOOKS OF OTHER PUBLISHERS

*Christianity on the Frontier*, by John A. Mackay. New York, The Macmillian Co., 1950. \$2.50.

*Decision Through Discussion, A Manual for Group Leaders*, by William E. Utterbach. New York, Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1950. 65 cents.

*For a Christian World: A National Congress on Home Missions*. Home Missions Council of North America, 297 Fourth Ave., New York, 10. 1950. 75 cents.

*Positive Protestantism*, by Hugh Thomson Kerr, Jr. Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1950. \$2.50.

*So We Believe—So We Pray*, by George Arthur Buttrick. Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951. \$2.75.

## FILMS

*Again Pioneers*. 70 minutes, sound, black and white. Rental \$12.00.

*Cross Tides*. 30 minutes, sound, color. Shows the work of church extension in the new communities of the far west. Rental \$8.00.

*For All People*. 22 minutes, sound, black and white. Rental \$6.00.

*We Would Be Building*. 21 minutes, sound. Rental: color, \$7.00; black and white, \$4.00.

For a complete list of audio-visual materials recommended for use with the theme "Churches for Our Country's Needs," send a request and ten cents to Dr. Gilbert Q. LeSourd, 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

## PROMOTION MATERIALS

*Display Packet*. Contents: 18 enlargements of covers of current books on colored stock, printed in two colors, size 12 by 16 inches; 10 posters in black and white about 10 different books, with descriptive line, approximately 12 by 16 inches; 1 sheet of pictured displays and directions for setting them up, approximately 19 by 25 inches; 1 folder of information sheets describing each book. \$2.00.

*Recording*. A phonograph record that brings you the authors of some of the Friendship Press books. In a lively way they present their personal points of view and talk to your group. One side of the record is on the home theme, the other side on the foreign theme. This disc is playable on any standard home phonograph, either stationary or portable. You'll have great success with it at meetings of all kinds. \$1.25.

## PRELIMINARY OR ORGANIZATION MEETING

If it is possible to organize the group before the first session the whole series will profit. Possibly only one officer will be necessary: a secretary. He will enter the names of the members of the group and record for action such as the following: subjects for research that have grown out of the discussion, additional material that should be ordered, new emphases to be followed in the next session. A Findings Committee that will be alert to summarize the proceedings of each meeting will have something worthwhile to give the group at the end of the study. This meeting will give you the opportunity to give a cover-all of the whole course, to point out the aims to be accomplished in the first session, to present methods, and to make necessary assignments.

### PREVIEWING SESSION ONE

#### AIMS OF THE STUDY

1. To bring the group to a realization of the fact that the church in America, as elsewhere, must further Christianity in a society whose dominant standards and goals are in opposition to those of Christianity.
2. To demonstrate that such conditions make of America a mission field calling for a missionary church.

#### ADVANCE PREPARATION

1. Reading by group: *Mission to America*, Chapter One.
2. Leader's look-ahead:
  - a. Reread *Mission to America*, Chapter One.
  - b. Review the outline of this session, using it as a basis for your procedure or as a point of departure.
  - c. Enlist in advance the cooperation of two or three persons who will come prepared to participate.
3. Suggested assignments by the leader for investigation and report:
  - a. Do state and church recognize the same values and goals? Ask someone to come prepared to present and discuss the author's statement that many of our church methods "inherited from the past were based on the assumption that the church and society . . . recognized in large measure the same values and goals." Is this true today?
  - b. What forces retard the church in our town? Ask a member of the

group to interview your pastor and leading Christian citizens on this question.

c. Ask another to come to the session prepared to answer the question: "To what extent does the church (or do the churches) in this town influence the life and activities of the community? Discover and describe the programs of social action and church extension of your local council of churches."

d. Dr. Douglass states: "The members of the Protestant churches, even when they are all counted as 'active,' constitute a numerical minority within the total community." Have someone check up on this in your community, finding out the total population, the membership in Protestant churches, Roman Catholic churches, and Jewish synagogues, and the population outside of any church. It will serve to focus attention if this is presented in the form of a chart or graph.

## *Session One*

# THE CHURCH HAS A MISSION TO AMERICA

### LEADER'S STATEMENT

A few years ago an attractive Jewish student of Russian background married a charming, fair-haired young woman, who, a Roman Catholic, had been educated in a convent and a Catholic college. Claiming to be broad-minded and liberal, rather than indifferent, they said their little child was to grow up without any religious instruction and that when she was old enough she was to be allowed to choose her own religion. A friendly Protestant reasoned with the father that at that very moment they were choosing for her, robbing her of the rich heritage of both of her parents. What seemed to them neutrality was decision. Dr. Douglass picks up one of the moot questions of our day—as to whether there should be any religious education in the public schools—and points out that “a religiously neutral education is not really neutral. It actually takes sides. It becomes a positive proponent of practical atheism.”

Thirty-five years ago a young woman who had recently become connected with the mission board of her denomination made her maiden speech at headquarters on the educational program of the board in Cuba. Eager to do her best before an important audience, she had worked hard on her talk. But when she finished, the general secretary of the organization said, “You missed the main point.” Troubled, she asked, “What could it have been?” The response was “You omitted to say that you were talking about Christian education.” Her reply was quick and surprised, “Why, isn’t all education inherently Christian education?” Dr. Douglass would say this was true in the distant past but not now. It is one of the points he makes to show that today the church has a background for its program far different from that of seventy-five or a hundred years ago.

This is but one point; our study will bring out many more.

### METHODS OF PROCEDURE

For this meeting the report-discussion method will be not only the most effective and valuable, but also the most provocative of interest in future sessions.

To get an over-all picture of the backgrounds of today as far as church and state are concerned, call on the member who has the first report to present it as a discussion question.

*Discussion I:* Are we safe in assuming that today as in the past the

church and the state recognize in large measure the same values and goals? Why or why not?

To give reality to Chapter One of *Mission to America*, which you can assume the group has read, bring the facts within the personal experience and knowledge of the group by reducing the general to the specific—that is, give local illustrations.

*Discussion II:* What forces in our town are retarding the progress of the church?

Call for a report of the member who had the interview with your pastor. (It would be effective if the actual interview instead of a report of it could be given here. A brief rehearsal would give this spontaneity and smoothness.) Prepare the “floor” beforehand for the questions that will follow this. Then expect a lively discussion—promote it if necessary.

*Discussion III:* To what extent does the church (or do the churches) in our town influence the life and activities of the community? Describe the social action and church extension programs of the local council of churches.

Call for a report from the person to whom this was assigned. Draw from the group other points or illustrations.

*Discussion IV:* Is Protestantism a numerical minority in our town?

Have the report presented, preferably in chart form. Are there new unchurched areas? Should our church establish one or more branches to minister to people now unreached?

*Discussion V:* (General) Why does the church seem more alive to those who are in it than to those who are outside of it?

## WORSHIP SERVICE

“GOD IS UTTERLY DEPENDABLE”

*Meditation:* “Of all the world’s religious literature, no prayer is more loved, none more profoundly moving, than is the Twenty-third Psalm,” stated Dr. Julius Mark, Senior Rabbi, Congregation Emanu-El of New York City at one of his Friday evening services. “For centuries past, it has given strength to the heavy-laden, consolation to the bereaved, courage to the faint of heart, and a feeling of victory in the presence of disappointment and defeat.” Then he proceeded to analyze the psalm. (Read slowly, pausing between sentences.)

*An Analysis of the Twenty-third Psalm:*

GUIDANCE:	“The Lord is my Shepherd.”
SUPPLY:	“I shall not want.”
PEACE:	“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.”
HARMONY:	“He leadeth me beside the still waters.”
HEALTH:	“He restoreth my soul.”

HONESTY :	"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness."
RESIGNATION :	"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death."
CONFIDENCE :	"I will fear no evil."
PROTECTION :	"For thou art with me."
COMFORT :	"Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."
PROVISION :	"Thou preparest a table before me."
CONSECRATION :	"Thou anointest my head with oil."
ABUNDANCE :	"My cup runneth over."
JOY :	"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."
CONSCIOUSNESS OF DIVINE LOVE :	"And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever." <sup>1</sup>

*Prayer:* Burn into my heart, Our Father, thy command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Give me the courage to "hold fast to that which is good." Awaken me to the fact that I am responsible for the spiritual welfare of my country. Make me alert to where this responsibility may lead me and prepare me for it. Deepen my dependence upon thee. O thou, who changest not, abide with me. In Christ's name I ask it. Amen.

## PREVIEWING SESSION TWO

### AIMS OF THE STUDY

1. To make the members of the group see "that there is a reality called the Christian tradition that is the basis of much of the life of our nation."
2. To bring before them the significance of the "resources and allies" that result from this.
3. To make them sense, on the other hand, that the Christian heritage may itself at times make the task of the church more difficult in our nation than in non-Christian lands.
4. To make them sense, too, that the church has larger responsibilities in a land that has a Christian heritage than in a non-Christian nation.

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

1. Reading by group: *Mission to America*, Chapter Three.
2. Leader's look-ahead:
  - a. Reread *Mission to America*, Chapter Three.
  - b. Review the suggested assignments given below, and choose, if it seems desirable, those that fit in best with your own plan of procedure or emphasis. However, if it seems best, all can be used and, as they stand, they constitute a unit.
3. Suggested assignments by the leader for investigation and report:

<sup>1</sup> Read by the Rev. Dr. Julius Mark, Senior Rabbi, Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York, Friday Evening Service, January 26, 1951. Used by permission.

a. Ask someone to analyze and illustrate what the author means by "we must not forget that there is a reality called the Christian tradition that is the basis of much in the life of our nation" and "The church in America has significant resources and allies that are lacking in societies that recognize no relationship to the Christian tradition."

b. Ask another to dig into the history of your community or town and report on the evidences found that its beginnings were in the "dynamic of faith," or on evidences to the contrary.

c. Ask a third person to prepare a talk based on the sentence, "The church in a nation that is nominally a Christian nation faces peculiar difficulties not present in lands where it is sharply and openly in conflict with other faiths."

d. Ask a fourth to analyze and illustrate the statement, "The church in America must assume large responsibilities that are not incumbent upon it in a non-Christian nation."

## *Session Two*

### THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION

#### LEADER'S STATEMENT

In the past the family Bible on the parlor table was an evidence that the home one was entering was a Christian home and the commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" a reality in the family.

The observance of the Day of Worship, with attendance at all divine services, with secular books and music put away and religious publications and hymnbooks brought out, with the reading of Bible stories in the evening by the fire, with all business places closed, was a recognition of the admonition of the fourth commandment, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy."

To his congregation the minister was a "man of God" and was held in great reverence; any criticism of him was frowned upon. The day school beside the church was an evidence of more than the physical closeness of the two, and the minister, often the teacher, made one the handmaiden of the other.

Quotations from the Bible were used freely in literature, not only because they seemed to have a peculiar fitness at all times but because they were accepted as final. The inscription on the Liberty Bell comes from *Leviticus*: "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof."

A minister, John Witherspoon, president of Princeton College, was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Many Christian ideas

were written into the Declaration of Independence. "It is undoubtedly true, too, that the formation of our national Constitution, and the representative form of government ensuing, were based fundamentally upon the general Presbyterian system. The Constitution begins with the words of Scottish church contracts, 'We the people.'"<sup>1</sup>

These things are part of our Christian tradition, but, according to Dr. Douglass, there is a reverse side. Sometimes, he says, the Christian tradition is a hindrance.

The personnel secretary of a foreign mission board always made it a point to ask candidates whether they had ever tried to bring anyone to Christ here at home. Often the answer was "no." "Why, then," she would ask, "do you think you could bring persons to Christ on the foreign field?" One cannot help wondering whether it was the Christian tradition that was a stumbling block to them.

## METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Here the commentator method will probably be both the most informative and the most challenging. This method calls for an analysis of the author's statements quoted in the assignment, confirmation or rebuttal. Illustrations and additional material from *Now!* and local experience should enrich the talks. Present the aims of the day's study, clarifying them as you go ahead, if it seems wise. Then call on the commentators in the order of the suggested assignments. They may speak on such subjects as the following, though making it clear that they are commenting on the author's statements:

The Christian Tradition and Our Nation

The Christian Tradition and Our Town (City or Community)

Difficulties of the Christian Church in a Nominally Christian Nation

Responsibility of the Christian Church in a Nominally Christian Nation

After the comments, throw the meeting open for a general discussion.

## WORSHIP SERVICE

### O TRUTH UNCHANGED, UNCHANGING

*Meditation:* It was at the end of a moving day. Father, mother, and little son had left the manor house to make their home on a nearby farm owned by the family, and the day had been hard. It was late, and wearily they began to make ready for bed. But the wife moved restlessly through the house, looking on the shelves, peering into this unpacked box and that, downstairs, then upstairs, for something she could not find. Suddenly she hurried into the bedroom, and said in a shocked voice, "James, we didn't bring a Bible." Without a word her husband rushed to the stable, quickly

<sup>1</sup> *Know Your Church! The Presbyterian Church: Its History, Organization, and Program.* Revised by William Thomson Hanzsche. Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1946. Used by permission.

saddled his horse, rode over to the old home, picked up the Bible from the table, and galloped back. It was unthinkable to either one of them to go to bed without a Bible in the house.

*Prayer:* Our Heavenly Father, we thank thee for our Christian heritage. May it be our chart and compass throughout life. May we witness to those who have seemingly rejected it, though it was once part of our common past. We know its power and would share it with others, that it may become a power in their lives. Give us winsomeness and grace in thy service. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

## PREVIEWING SESSION THREE

### AIMS OF THE STUDY

1. To bring before the group the picture of the shifts of population in the last fifteen or twenty years and the growth of population in the last decade.
2. To show the significance of both of these on the life of the church and the problems involved.

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

1. Reading by group: *Mission to America*, Chapter Four.
2. Leader's look-ahead:
  - a. Reread *Mission to America*, Chapter Four.
  - b. Read also *Again Pioneers*, Chapter Two, and *Missions at the Grass Roots*, Chapter Three.
3. Suggested assignments by the leader for investigation and report:
  - a. Ask a member to outline briefly the salient points given in Chapter Four on the factors or situations that enter into the need and demand for new churches.
  - b. Ask a second member for a report on the problems of church extension now being faced, the types of communities needing churches, the demand for these, the request for funds and leadership. Specific illustrations would vivify the story. Send for denominational literature and see *Mission to America*.
  - c. Ask another to visit your state home mission executive to find out in what areas mushroom communities have grown up, also when there have been industrial new developments and where there has been suburban growth. How is the church meeting the needs in these various types of communities?
  - d. How does a new church grow? Ask someone to give the various steps, also to trace the history of your own church, the help it received, if any, from the board of home missions, its contribution to other churches through the board.
  - e. Ask someone to tell stories of the results of population changes, *Mission to America*, pp. 68-72. Gather also local stories that illustrate similar situations.

## *Session Three*

### PROFILE OF AMERICA

#### LEADER'S STATEMENT

One has only to study the situation in one's own church to realize that it does not operate in a vacuum. What affects the city or town or rural community in which it is situated affects it. A New York City church was located in a well-to-do residential section on the West Side, its pews filled every Sunday. Newcomers had to wait six months to be assigned a sitting. Then the New York Central Railroad covered its tracks between Forty-second and Ninety-sixth Streets, and a new broad street on the East Side was opened up above the tracks. The result was Park Avenue, a more desirable residential street, with ultra-modern apartment houses. An exodus of families from the west to the east followed, their church letters for the most part going with them. The newcomers who took their places were mainly Jewish people, who were amply served by a synagogue with a fine program.

Too, the crowded city, the difficulties of transportation within it, the hard sidewalks that furnished no playgrounds, drove many families, particularly those with children, from the neighborhood to the suburbs. Where did that leave the once thriving church?

"Waiting . . . Waiting"<sup>1</sup> is the title of a graphic leaflet issued by a home mission board. It epitomizes a situation that was true ten years before it was written and that has only changed for the worse since. It calls attention to the fact that the United States has never settled down. It concedes that it has "its drowsy corners" that do not change much from year to year, but claims that these are not typical. Then it pictures our country in motion. "In the last ten years, about one person in two has moved. . . . Other hundreds of thousands are moving from small town and country areas into suburbs around big cities. . . . Sections of city populations have shifted. A downtown church wakes up to the fact that its members come to church from miles away, while thousands of new neighbors at the church doors are not being reached. . . . At the same time the people who have moved to the suburbs want new churches in their neighborhoods." Quotations from letters such as the following picture the national situation:

Three years ago our population was 300. Now it is nearly 3,000. Out at the air base there are 2,000 more. A construction crew of 700 will be here

<sup>1</sup> "Waiting . . . Waiting." New York, Presbyterian Board of National Missions, 1951. Used by permission.

for three years, working on an irrigation canal. When we have that water, 70,000 more acres will be under cultivation, and more people will come in.

## METHOD OF PROCEDURE

A panel presentation of the material assembled might be the best method of bringing it before the group. Have the members of the panel sit around a table at the front of the room and, to all intents and purposes, make their reports to one another. They are talking in general about the subject, "Churches for Our Country's Needs," with particular emphasis on church extension. One member of the group will be the leader or moderator, but the presentations should be informal, conversational, and lively. The order might well follow the order of the assignments. Following the presentations, the members of the panel should discuss the questions among themselves. Then have the floor take over the discussion, bringing in new facts, interpretations, and illustrations.

## WORSHIP SERVICE

### MY CHURCH

*Scripture:* *Ephesians 2:19-22.*

*Meditation:* Reading of "What the Church Means to Me" by Jameson Jones in *Now!*

*Prayer:* May we, too, make the discovery that in the church we find God and he finds us. The church is of thee, doing thy work through the lives of people like us. May we realize that, no matter how small or weak we are, the church can use us. Help us to find ways of making our lives count. In Christ's name we ask it. Amen.

## PREVIEWING SESSION FOUR

### AIMS OF THE STUDY

1. To introduce the group to the outlying areas of large cities known as suburbs, growing up everywhere in the United States.
2. To make the group see that, despite the fact that "they have everything," suburbs are as truly a mission field as a more primitive area of need.
3. To show how the church works in seeking to meet this need.

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

1. Reading by the group: *Mission to America*, Chapter Five.
2. Leader's look-ahead:
  - a. Reread *Mission to America*, Chapter Five.
  - b. If the motion picture, "We Would Be Building" has been procured for this session, have the operator try it out to see that all is in readiness. It would be well for you to see it in order to point up the discussion on it more readily.

3. Suggested assignments by the leader for investigation and report:

If the question and answer method is to be followed, as suggested in Method of Procedure, rather than the visual, make the assignments in the form of questions.

a. What is a suburb, and why do people move there? What problems does the suburb create for the city? for the country? Why does the author call the suburb "religion's no man's land"? Why one of the needy areas of American life? Why does the superintendent state to the candidate for a hard job that Sunrise Gardens (any suburb) is "tougher than anything you've mentioned"?

b. "There are people in the suburbs," states the author, and characterizes them from the point of view of their inherent spiritual needs. What are these?

c. How does a suburban church come into being?

d. What is meant by the "comprehensive religious strategy" of today as over against the past?

e. Ask someone to give success stories from "suburbia." (See pages 85-87.)

## *Session Four*

### THE CHURCH IN THE SUBURBS

#### LEADER'S STATEMENT

(If the motion picture is to be used, let it be the "Leader's Statement," only a few words of introduction being given. The following then would be omitted.)

The suburb is the outward thrust of the city and the inward rural thrust. If we should make a drawing of any city and its environs, we should see it as the hub, with spokes going out in all directions. Sometimes the spokes are far apart, indicating undeveloped areas. More often they are close together, indicating that the suburbs their tips represent are also close together, some day to become one town. Again, at times they differ in length, some long, some short. The long ones show that the suburb is at some distance; the short ones show that the suburb was developed close to the city and some day may be part of it.

(Select the city nearest your town, and, by writing to the Chamber of Commerce, get facts to give your group at this point. How many recognized suburbs are there? What is the largest? What is the smallest? What sections of the city were once suburbs and are now incorporated into the city? How many commuters come into the city every day for business

reasons? What is the total suburban population? The city population? Do the suburbs depend on the city or vice versa? This will give you excellent material for a "For instance" and enlist the interest of your group, as you will be talking about something they know.)

## METHOD OF PROCEDURE

It is suggested that here the visual-discussional method, with the use of the motion picture "We Would Be Building" be used. The showing time is about twenty minutes. As the picture brings out most of the points made in this chapter on the suburbs, it can be used as a springboard to the discussion. The assignments will aid in this, also.

## ALTERNATE METHOD

If it is found that the motion picture will not be available, use the question and answer method for this session. Have members of the group bring in questions they would like to have answered as a result of their reading. These may be deposited in a box and drawn, the one drawing the question answering it or, if he cannot answer it, passing it on to someone else. Or the questions might be put from the floor, you, as leader, to assign them for answer. Put the questions given in the assignments, asking those who have worked on them to give answers.

## WORSHIP SERVICE

"USE US TO DO THY WILL!"

*Meditation:* "Is it any affair of yours that many hundreds of communities here in America have no churches? Is it your concern that in many places—especially in rural areas where population has been decreasing—churches that for generations were the center of community life and permeated all its interests are being closed because the people are no longer able to maintain them? Is it in any way your business when a downtown church in the city sees its members moving to the suburbs, watches the nearby residences become rooming-houses, and then, at just the moment when its services are most critically needed, is compelled to limit its ministries for want of support? Are you in any personal sense involved in the issue when the church declines qualitatively as well as in numbers and resources, when its testimony grows pallid, its fellowship cold, its worship mumbling and spiritless?"

"If the Christian mission in the world is inconceivable without the church, then what happens to the church is your business and mine—if we are Christians." *Mission to America*, page 31.

*Prayer:* Strike home to us, Our Father, that the affairs of the church are the affairs of every Christian. Make us satisfied only as we have a share in the spreading of the gospel, and, through it, of the establishment of the Christian community in our town and throughout our nation. Hold us to our task that we may do thy will. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

## PREVIEWING SESSION FIVE

### AIMS OF THE STUDY

1. To point out that "the primary task of church extension will be accomplished as existing congregations take more seriously their individual and cooperative responsibility for carrying the gospel and the Christian fellowship to the millions who are now at their very doors."
2. To make the members of the class realize that this task can be accomplished only if the churches of all denominations cooperate.

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

1. Reading by group: *Mission to America*, Chapter Six.
2. Leader's look-ahead:
  - a. Reread *Mission to America*, Chapter Six.
  - b. Give special attention to the arrangement of chairs for this session. A circle of chairs would be better than two or three rows.

3. Suggested assignments by the leader for investigation and report:
  - a. If you believe with the author that "the primary task of church extension will be accomplished as existing congregations take more seriously their individual cooperative responsibility for carrying the gospel and the Christian fellowship to the millions who are now at their very doors" what do you see as the responsibility of your church? Determine this through study, by making a survey of the community, and by conducting interviews.

If taking the church to the people is a valid method of penetration, do you see any points or places at which your church could act along this line effectively?

- b. The statement is made that in the average Protestant church it takes one hundred enrolled church members to bring in four a year on confession of faith. Check up and compare the admission of new members into your church for the past five years with the membership to see whether the record of your church is in accordance with this statement. Through conversation with your pastor see whether you can find out what reasons new members gave for wanting to come into your church.

- c. To penetrate the whole life of the community, individual congregations in proximity must find ways of uniting for service. Present ways by which your church might cooperate for the community good with churches of other denominations.

- d. Bring the service record of your church up to date—that is, ministers, mission workers, deaconesses, doctors and nurses, social service workers, etc., who have gone out from the church. Visualize it in the form of a starstudded flag, and present it at the proper time to the congregation.

- e. What methods of church extension has your church used in the past? Let the leader investigate this herself and work the information she gathers into the conversation in Session Five.

## Session Five

# THE INDIVIDUAL CHURCH EXTENDS ITSELF

### LEADER'S STATEMENT

(A specific story is suggested here but the leader should study *Now!* to see if there is a more helpful one for his group.)

Tell the story "The Church at Street Level" from *Now!* Based on the outreach of the church, it has a message for us. Digested, it goes as follows: The DeWitt Memorial Church on New York's Lower East Side was built in 1881. For years the neighborhood has been the dumping ground for newly arrived immigrants, driving them closer together and emphasizing their differences. The Waltons, pastors of the church, established the custom of bringing them together for an international dinner. At last year's dinner, foods of thirty countries constituted the feast.

The church has no denominational requirements for admission. Roman Catholics, Jews, and Protestants are taken into the programs, and many join the church when they see what it is like. Originally they were chiefly German and Irish, but the shift in population groups calls now for services in English, Spanish, and Russian. The worshipers include persons of twenty-one nationalities and the elders Italians, Germans, Russians, Puerto Ricans, Chinese, and Indonesians. New housing developments in the area are bringing more Christian families; 150 new members have been added and the Sunday school enrollment has doubled. But it is the Waltons themselves who are the pivot. They believe that one of the best ways to express Christianity is through respect for the beliefs and customs of others.

The point of this story for us is that the Waltons looked around to see what was needed and in their own way supplied it—the open church door, language changes for their changing congregations, music of the different lands, fellowship, camps for children, and—the church. Our situation is different, but given their zeal, understanding, and imagination, who can tell what great things we may do?

### METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Let this session follow the method of an informal conversation concerning what is involved in your own church, its outreach, and its cooperation. Those having the assignments should open the conversation informally to give the tone and the atmosphere of meeting. The first conversationalist (assignment a) will report on his activities and findings—telling what he learned about the boundaries of the parish, the other churches involved,

the number of persons within its boundaries who are in some church, and the number outside. What were the outcomes of his interviews—with his pastor, with the church worker, with a business man outside of the church, with pastors of other churches? Let him tell them what *he* sees as the possible outreach of their church in the community. Questions along the way should be encouraged.

At this point, the second conversationalist (assignment b) has a statement to make on the number required in the average church to bring in one member, following up with a report on your own church. Is it higher or lower than the average? He will relate his remarks to those of the previous speaker as far as membership is concerned. He will point out that “evangelism is the personal responsibility of every member” and make it clear that no method “can replace the testimony spoken by individual to individual.”

The first speaker may pick this up to make the point that, after all, they are thinking not only of membership but of community fellowship and service. He will then tell of points of need he has discovered, calling them “human concerns that ought to have the interest and support of the church.”

After conversation on the point made, the second speaker may return to the question of membership. Should prejudice be tolerated in any form? Can we really say that the church is open to everyone regardless of race and color?

The third conversationalist (assignment c) comments on the size of the problem, too large for one church to handle. He suggests ways in which all Protestant churches in the neighborhood may cooperate in order to find a solution.

Have the conversations lead into some conclusion. They will differ depending upon conditions surrounding the individual church, but some effective points may be made, as for instance, the acceptance of the statement that “evangelism is the personal responsibility of every member” and the obligation on the group to pass on to the whole congregation the result of their study and thinking. Two or three persons could be appointed to act on the conclusions that have been reached by the group during the discussion and report back.

### ALTERNATE SUGGESTIONS

1. If the motion picture, “We Would Be Building” was not used for Session Four, “Again Pioneers” might well be used in this session as an example of opportunities for outreach. The picture itself will be the basis of discussion, and this might also lead into some of the points brought out by the assignments.

2. Have your best book reviewer read *So Sure of Life* and tell the story to the group as an example of how a work extended itself into the community. Suggest questions for discussion.

## WORSHIP SERVICE

### "PIONEERS OF A NEW HUMANITY"

#### *Meditation:*

The great difference between present day Christianity and that of which we read in these letters (New Testament epistles) is that to us it is primarily a performance, to them it was a real experience. We are apt to reduce the Christian religion to a code, or at best a rule of heart and life. To these men it is quite plainly the invasion of their lives by a new quality of life altogether. They do not hesitate to describe this as Christ "living in" them. Mere moral reformation will hardly explain the transformation and the exuberant vitality of these men's lives—even if we could prove a motive for such reformation, and certainly the world around offered little encouragement to the early Christians! We are practically driven to accept their explanation, which is that their little human lives had, through Christ, been linked up with the very life of God.

. . . Many Christians today talk about the "difficulties of our times" as though we should have to wait for better ones before the Christian religion can take root. It is heartening to remember that this faith took root and flourished amazingly in conditions that would have killed anything less vital in a matter of weeks. Those early Christians were on fire with the conviction that they became, through Christ, literally sons of God; they were pioneers of a new humanity, founders of a new kingdom. They still speak to us across the centuries. Perhaps if we believe what they believed, we might achieve what they achieved.<sup>1</sup>

Let us take Paul's admonitions to the Romans as coming to us:

You cannot, indeed, be a Christian at all unless you have something of his spirit in you.

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within.

Let us have real warm affection for one another as between brothers, and a willingness to let the other man have the credit.

Live in harmony with each other. Don't become snobbish but take a real interest in ordinary people. Don't become set in your opinions. Don't pay back a bad turn by a bad turn, *to anyone*. Don't say "it doesn't matter what people think," but see that your public behavior is beyond criticism.

Don't allow yourself to be overpowered by evil. Take the offensive—overpower evil by good!

May the God of Hope fill *you* with joy and peace in your faith, that by the power of the Holy Spirit, your whole life and outlook may be radiant in the hope.<sup>2</sup>

Amen and Amen.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters to Young Churches—A Translation of the New Testament Epistles*, by J. B. Phillips. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1950. Used by permission.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Used by permission. For comparison, see King James Version of the Bible: Romans 8:9; 12:1; 12:9; 12:16-18; 15:8.

## PREVIEWING SESSION SIX

### AIMS OF THE STUDY

1. To bring the group to an understanding of some of the "antagonists" the church must face.
2. To make them see what the church really is and what its task is.
3. To bring home to them that as Christians their vocation is within the church and that their responsibility is the church and its extension.

### ADVANCE PREPARATION

1. Reading by the group: *Mission to America*, Chapters Two, Seven, and Eight.
2. Leader's look-ahead:
  - a. Reread *Mission to America*, Chapters Two, Seven, and Eight.
  - b. Read *For a Christian World—A National Congress on Home Missions*, (1) article by Ralph Sockman to the local church, pages 9-10, and (2) article by Reinhold Niebuhr on secularism, pages 15-19.
  - c. Read *I Peter* 2:1-11.
3. Suggested assignments by the leader for investigation and report:
  - a. Ask someone to prepare himself to present and discuss what Dr. Douglass terms the "antagonists" to Christianity (pages 16-18) and the "chief threat to Protestantism" (pages 22-23), remembering the question: "Are we Christians pressing our mission with any equivalent conviction and devotion?" (Page 18.)
  - b. Ask another to discuss the meaning of "We must rediscover the fact that Christianity is also a movement, and that the organ of this movement is the Christian church." (Page 18.)
  - c. Ask a third to procure from his own mission board illustrations to give reality to the statement, "We have seen the church," (page 23) or he may draw these from *Now!*
  - d. Have a fourth discuss what it would mean to the church if every person would believe and follow the statement, "Our vocation as Christians is within the church," (page 30) really believing that our vocation as Christians is primarily fulfilled in being men and women of the church.
  - e. If the Supplementary Session is not to be held, ask a member of the class or your pastor to make a study of Chapter Seven, "Toward A Responsible Churchmanship" as it relates to your church.
  - f. Assign to someone the preparation of a talk on "The Task of the Church," drawing material from Chapter Two and Chapter Eight.

## Session Six

# THE REALITY OF THE CHURCH

### LEADER'S STATEMENT

The most effective statement you could make here is the "definition" of the church as given on pages 29-32, *Mission to America*. Through it the group will understand more clearly what the church is historically and what its purpose is. The Bible passage suggested under the leader's look-ahead could well be used in this connection.

### METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The chapter under discussion has many high points. Attempts have been made to bring these out in the suggested assignments and leader's statement. It would seem that the best method is the symposium. Each one to whom an assignment has been made will make his report or give his talk. Let the session culminate with the prepared talk and group conversation on "The Task of the Church."

It would be well for you to gather up the points made in a closing statement or brief talk that will sum up or give life to the four facts given as the aim of the study. (See Introduction.)

### WORSHIP SERVICE

#### THE UNDAUNTED COMMUNITY

*Meditation:* "For Christ came not only to give us victory over sin and death in our individual lives but to introduce into the world a new kind of corporate life, a new and undaunted community, a revolutionary kind of fellowship. This community, this fellowship, is the church. The fact that it exists is a part of the good news of the gospel of Christ." (*Mission to America*, page 29.)

"The distinctive gift of Christianity is . . . a colony of the new community, the church. And the Christian movement will not go forward with power until we recover a singleness of purpose and believe in our hearts that our supreme vocation as Christians is the proclamation of the gospel and the upbuilding of the church of Christ." (Page 33.)

"It is through the work of evangelism, the establishing of the gospel in the hearts and lives of men and women, that the church has wrought most effectively for the transformation of human society." (Page 36.)

"We are to build and extend and purify the church. We are to do this—such is the strange and humbling mystery of God's call to us—by taking

our place within the actual churches. The Christian mission is a mission in, through, and for the church.

"We have seen that Christianity cannot be known or communicated apart from the life of a fellowship. The Christian movement in the world is borne by a community, which is the church. To imagine that there may be some way by which the life of individuals and society may be made Christian without the necessity of concerning ourselves with the existence, vitality, and relevance of the Christian church and its ministry is to follow a chimera." (Page 39.)

"The Message of the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches said: 'The greatest contribution the church can make to the renewal of society is that it should be renewed in its own life, in faith and obedience to its Lord.'" (Pages 37, 38.)

*Prayer:* Our Heavenly Father, too deep, too profound is the meaning of the words, "the royal priesthood," "chosen generation," "an holy nation," "a peculiar people" for us to comprehend fully. We would be active members of the undaunted community, but we are weak and stumbling. Call us out of darkness into thy marvelous light. Steady us by thy promises, and send us forth to thy service. In the name of thy Son, we pray. Amen.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY SESSION

The chapter "Toward A Responsible Churchmanship" deals with a method of church organization and should therefore be handled with both a larger group than the mission study group and a group more representative of all the church boards under whose jurisdiction the church functions. It is therefore suggested that an approach be made to the pastor to see whether such a group can be drawn together for a discussion of the proposition made by the author looking toward a method of furthering church leadership. It is suggested that the study leader or group make the opening statement, summing up the work of the study sessions, the pastor to take it up from there and lead the discussion. '

## SUGGESTED PROGRAMS FOR FAMILY CHURCH NIGHTS

Family church nights may be part of a school of missions. If you are holding such a school, the suggestions given here will prove helpful in arranging for the church night programs. However, the series of programs is a unit in itself, based on the adult study book *Mission to America* and the supplementary book, *Now! Everybody Needs a Church*. Ideally the series should be used by the study classes to present their findings to the whole church. To attract attention and, subsequently, an audience, the programs are cast in popular form. As a whole, they cover the main points of the two books in an easily digested manner.

If a school of missions is not being held the church nights might well be preceded by a fellowship supper. The schedule, then, would be:

6:00 Fellowship Supper

7:00 Church Night Program, closing not later than 8:15 or 8:30.

To make these nights the success you desire, you should plan careful promotion. The pastor should appoint a committee consisting of one member from each of the church groups, men's, women's, youth, children's (leader). Let them together work out methods of promotion.

### TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

TOPIC: CHURCHES FOR OUR COUNTRY'S NEEDS

*Aim:* To inform the assembly of conditions in America that make new churches imperative.

*Feature:* Panel Presentation

The pastor should serve as moderator. He will speak briefly on the subject, then introduce the speakers, telling something about their background and qualifications for presenting their subjects.

FIRST SPEAKER: Snapshot of America Today; reference: *Mission to America*, pages 60-65.

SECOND SPEAKER: What Happens Church-wise When People Migrate?; reference: pages 68-72.

THIRD SPEAKER: The Task of the Church in This Situation; reference: pages 72-76 and other parts of the chapters.

After the presentation the moderator will draw the audience into the discussion. Such questions as these might come up: "Do we actually need more churches?" "Why not concentrate on improving some of the churches

now in existence?" (See pages 75 and 76 for answers.) What is to be done about a community that writes: "Three years ago our population was 300. Now it is nearly 3,000"? These questions should be addressed to one of the three speakers. Two or more might address the second speaker, with "I am an example of what you have been talking about," and give personal reminiscences as given on pages 68-72.

The moderator should sum up the presentations, discuss them briefly, and thank the speakers and the audience.

#### *Alternate Feature: A Lecture*

Select a speaker who knows the situations that have developed in your city, county, or state due to shifting populations and new developments.

#### *Worship Suggestions:*

OPENING SENTENCES: *I Corinthians* 3:11, 16, 23.

HYMN: "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord."

SCRIPTURE: *I Corinthians* 3:10; *Ephesians* 2:22, *Hebrews* 3:4; *Genesis* 28:7.

#### CLOSING PRAYER PETITIONS:

Bring to us the realization of what the church has meant to us from childhood to today.

Make us see what it would mean to us to live in a community without a church; what it would mean to a community not to have a church.

Impress upon us the responsibility that rests on us as Christians to help extend thy church to places of need and show us where to take hold.

Make us keen to see that the enrichment of the church from within depends on our obedience to the Father's precepts and on our belief in the gospel of His Son.

"Revive thy church, O Lord, beginning with me."

HYMN: "The Church's One Foundation" (three stanzas); tune: Aurelia.

#### BENEDICTION.

#### *Preparation by Leaders*

*Mission to America*, Chapters One, Three, Four.

*Now! Everybody Needs a Church* (for illustrations).

## II

### "WE WOULD BE BUILDING"

#### SCREEN NIGHT

*Aim:* To vivify the preceding program with a concrete example in visual form.

*Feature:* Motion picture "We Would Be Building."

As yours is a church meeting, use scripture, prayer, and hymn to set the stage.

It would be well if the presiding officer would bring out such points as that the picture was photographed on location, using the actual people of

the church, and that it pictures many similar projects now being conducted all over the country; that its primary purpose is to show the need for new churches in new areas and how all can cooperate in meeting the need; that its special purpose is to show how a minister and people work together to strengthen their church and to illustrate the success one church has had.

After the showing of the film follow through with discussion. Possible questions might be: What crucial conditions pointed to the need of a church? What factors determine where and when a church should be built? Who makes (or make) the final decision? If money is lacking how can a new church be financed? How can a church be sure that no other denomination will build in the immediate community? What advantage in a new community would a community church have over a denominational one? What responsibility do we, as a church, have for helping to meet such situations?

#### *Advance Preparation:*

1. Promote attendance by news releases in local papers, through posters on the bulletin board and about town, through notices in the church bulletins, and through a telephone squad. (Ask your promotion committee to follow these suggestions.)

2. Check film beforehand to insure a smooth performance. Use only a sound projector. Have a competent operator.

#### *Worship Suggestions:*

HYMN: "We Would Be Building"; tune: Finlandia.

SCRIPTURE: *I Peter 2:5-10.*

CLOSING LITANY OF PRAISE: My Church.

*The following may be adapted for your group and should be spoken slowly and with emphasis. Prepare the group for the response. If desired, this could be developed effectively for a speech choir.*

READER: Before I was born my church gave to my parents ideals of life and love that made my home a place of strength and beauty.

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

READER: In helpless infancy my church joined my parents in consecrating me to Christ and in baptizing me in his name.

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

READER: My church enriched my childhood with . . . the lessons of life that have been woven into the texture of my soul. Sometimes I seem to have forgotten and then, when else I might surrender to foolish and futile ideals of life, the truths my church taught become radiant, insistent, and inescapable.

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

READER: In the stress and storm of adolescence my church heard the surge of my soul and she guided my footsteps by lifting my eyes toward the stars.

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

READER: When first my heart knew the strange awakenings of love

my church taught me to chasten and spiritualize my affections; she sanctified my marriage and blessed my home.

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

READER: When my heart was seamed with sorrow, and I thought the sun could never shine again, my church drew me to the Friend of the Weary and whispered to me the hope of another morning, eternal and tearless.

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

READER: When my steps have slipped and I have known the bitterness of sin, my church has believed in me and wooingly she has called me back to live within the heights of myself.

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

READER: Now have come the children dearer to me than life itself and my church is helping me to train them for all joyous and clean and Christly living.

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

READER: My church calls me to her heart. She asks my service and my loyalty. She has a right to ask it! I will help her to do for others what she has done for me. In this place in which I live I will help her keep aflame and aloft the torch of a living faith.<sup>1</sup>

RESPONSE: We praise thee, O God.

PRAYER: We pray thee, O God, that we may be the means of helping others to find a church home and that the church may mean to them what it means to us. Guide their footsteps by lifting their eyes to the stars. May they, too, help the church "keep aflame and aloft the torch of a living faith." In Christ's name, Amen.

HYMN: "I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord."

BENEDICTION.

### III

## THE CHURCH REACHES OUT

### DRAMA NIGHT

*Aim:* To make real to the group through dramatic sketches the fact that the church is constantly reaching out in service.

*Feature:* Dramatic Sketches

1. Select from *Now!* the stories you feel are most worthwhile and most dramatic, and have them told, if they can be so adapted, in the following ways:

- a. a monologue
- b. a dramatic sketch by three or four persons
- c. a report
- d. a news story
- e. a radio speech: The Voice of America

<sup>1</sup> Published by the Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., New York. Used by permission.

2. If you desire, use only one method, preferably the dramatic, and with an introduction and connecting remarks weave them together, as are Maugham's *Quartet* and *Trio*. Yours might be *Quintet* or *Sextet*.

*Alternate Features:* *Travelin'*, a one act play, simple in setting and easy to produce, dealing with the life of migrant workers and the service of the church among them. Characters, three men and five women. It might be given as a walking rehearsal. Time 20 minutes; price 35 cents. (Order from denominational headquarters.)

Discussion Question: How is our church reaching out to others, and what more can it do?

*Worship Suggestions:*

HYMN: "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life."

SCRIPTURE: The Beatitudes (in unison); *Luke* 4:17-20.

CLOSING HYMN: "O Brother Man, Fold to Thy Heart Thy Brother."

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION.

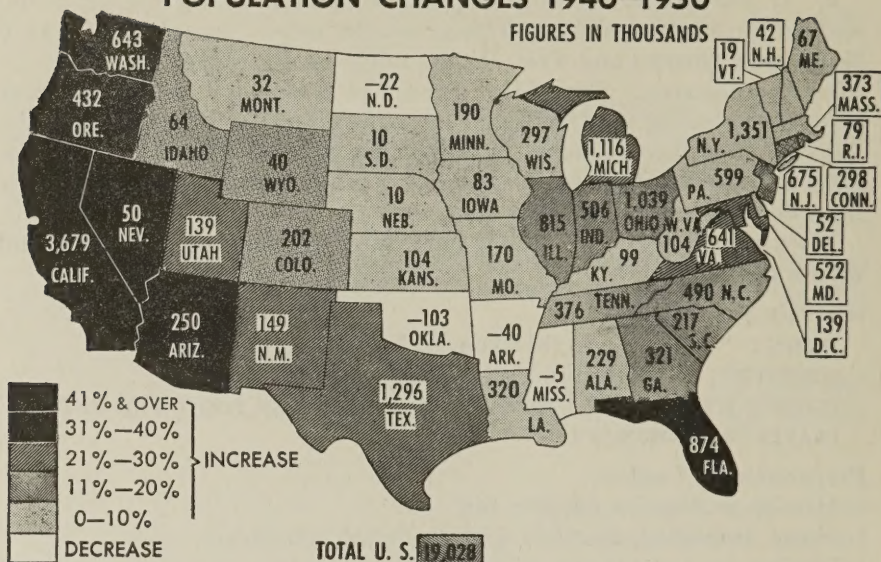
*Preparation by Leaders*

*Mission to America*, Chapter Six.

*Now! Everybody Needs a Church* (whole pamphlet).

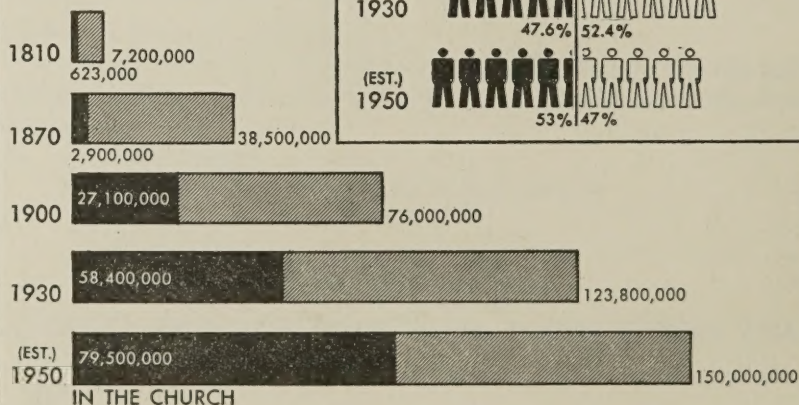
Leaflets on the outreach of the church, issued by your denominational board of home missions.

# POPULATION CHANGES 1940-1950



## CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IN TOTAL POPULATION

in total figures



in percent

